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This handsome species I discovered at Willow Spring, Arizona, in 1874, at an altitude of 7195 feet, in damp places, among the oak woods, (No. 238.) It will be fig. 26 of my forthcoming report.—J. T. ROTHROCK.

CHIMAJA.—A well known plant in New Mexico, where it is used to flavor roast meats, to make bitters, and as a warming stomachic, proves to be an old species, i. e. *Cymopterus Fendleri*, Gray.

It (the root) has a most pleasant anisate odor when fresh and also when cooked. What invests the plant with a special interest is the fact that its local repute has induced certain parties to propose it as the basis of another new quack medicine. It is probably of not more value than sundry other species of the order.—J. T. ROTHROCK.

SOME OREGON GRAMINEÆ.—In the Centennial exhibit of Oregon, at Philadelphia, was a collection of native grasses in bundles or sheaves, intended to show the grazing capacity of that State. I was much interested in these grasses and secured a quantity for specimens. They consisted of 10 or 12 species, of which the following named ones presented some features of interest:

Agrostis microphylla, Steud. This is called Wild Red-top, grows on bottom lands, and averages 4 feet in height. This is considered by Prof. Thurber to be one of the forms of *Agrostis exarata*, Trin. It is the form with awned flowers, and differs widely from the *A. exarata* figured in Trinius' Species Graminum, Vol. 1, fig. 27, which is unawned, slender, and with an open spreading panicle. The *A. microphylla* is a strong upright grower, with a rather narrow but dense panicle, which is 6 to 10 inches long, the branches very numerous at each joint, mostly short but of unequal length, and rather apprresssed at the axis.

There were two sheaves under the name of Wild Rye grass, one of which was the *Elymus condensatus*, Presl., growing from 5 to 8 feet high, said to be very nutritious but too coarse for usual feed. The other was a much more slender grass of about 3 feet in height, the spike much resembling a *Triticum*; in fact, it seems to unite *Elymus* with *Triticum*. It is not a dwarf *E. condensatus*, for the joints of the spike are more distant, and instead of giving out 5 or 6 spikelets, there are never more than two, and in many cases the upper joints have only one spikelet. It answers to herbarium specimens labeled *Elymus triticoides*, Nutt., and I suppose it to be that plant. Apparently the same plant is in the collection of Xantus, from Lower California, as *Triticum repens*, with which it is probably often confounded.

Another sheaf was called Wild Fescue grass, from Eastern Oregon, "growing from 10 inches to 1½ feet high, full of seeds and very nutritious." This is probably the *Ceratochloa* (*Bromus*) *breviaristata* of Hooker, though smaller than his figure in Fl. Bor. Am. It is likewise the same as is collected in the mountains of Nevada, Wyoming, Utah and Colorado, and called *B. breviaristatus*, and I hardly see how it can be separated from the *B. unioloides* of Texas and Arizona. It seems to vary much in consequence of altitude, soil and climate: The awn in the Oregon specimens is very short, perhaps one-fifth the length of the lower palet, answering in this respect to the description and figure of Hooker.

The remaining species which I shall mention was a kind of fescue growing 3 to 5 feet high, which I consider an undescribed species, and will here append its characters:

FESTUCA OREGONA.—Culms tall, 3 to 5 feet, rather slender, slightly scabrous. Culm leaves few and distant, the sheaths 6 to 8 inches long, blade narrowly linear, 2 to 4 inches long; sheaths scabrous. Panicle erect, narrow, strict, but loose; branches mostly in fives, very unequal, the shorter ones nearly sessile, the longer 1½ to 2 inches, flowering nearly to the base; spikelets about 3-flowered, 4 to 5 lines long, pedicels and rachis hispid; glumes narrowly lanceolate, 2 to 2½ lines long, nearly equal to the lower palet, 3-nerved, hispid on the keel, otherwise slightly scabrous, acute; lower palet linear lanceolate, slightly compressed, rather indistinctly 5-nerved, acute, but not awned, minutely scabrous, somewhat scarious and bronzed at the tip. Oregon.

This has some resemblance to *Festuca pratensis*, but has a denser panicle, with more numerous branches, and is not nodding but erect. The glumes are also longer, and the palets blunter and thinner. It approaches the section *Atropis* of *Poa*, which seems to connect *Poa* and *Festuca*.—GEO. VASEY.

MORE ABOUT BALLAST PLANTS.—A few days ago I paid my first visit of the season to the ballast ground near Philadelphia; some matters of interest were observed, of which I am prompted to make mention. Since the publication of my article some months ago on these new comers, I have received many letters of inquiry, as to certain plants herein mentioned, and have had a demand for specimens far beyond my ability to furnish, showing a developing interest in the matter of introduction and distribution of species.

Some plants that were very abundant last year I could find no trace of, but others in their stead of equal beauty and interest. In the following list will be noticed many species that are occasionally met with in waste grounds around cities and often in neglected country places, but it is probable that the specimens collected were from imported seeds:

Ranunculus bulbosus, L., and *R. repens*, L., both quite abundant; the former presents no variation from its usual condition, but the latter is the typical form: prostrate, very hairy, and sending out long runners, exhibiting the same characters as specimens from Europe now in my herbarium. There is, however, a plant growing along the shores of the Delaware River near Philadelphia, that I have been familiar with for the last twenty years, and have never seen it produce a runner of any kind, or show any disposition that way. It is upright in habit, often very smooth, with leaves three times the size of those on the ballast plant. Prof. Gray, to whom I sent a specimen last year, writes me, that it is one of the many forms he has had to refer to *R. repens*, L. When I have examined some of our *Compositæ* and been sorely puzzled to know what species they were on account of their close resemblance one to another, and have remembered this *Ranunculus* with its many variations, and so strikingly different in habit, appearance, &c., I have asked myself the question, what is a species, and what are characters on which species and varieties are based?

Erysimum cheiranthoides, Br., has sparingly occurred in former years, but I found only one specimen.

Three species of *Diplotaxis* are quite common, *muralis*, Boiss., *monensis*, Hudson, and *tenuifolia*, Boiss. The last seems to be fast gaining a foothold.

Thlaspi arvense. L., one specimen collected. It has occasionally been found in former years.

Camelina sativa, Crantz, is quite plentiful, some of the specimens more than two feet in height. This species occurs frequently in grain fields and on roadsides, but usually not of such luxuriant growth.

Lepidium ruderale, L., is very abundant. Two specimens of *Lepidium campestre*, L., were collected. I have seen this occasionally on roadsides in the vicinity of Philadelphia, but it is rarely met with.

Senebiera coronopus, DC., and *S. didyma*, Pers., are both abundant.

Sisymbrium Sophia, L., not so plentiful as in former years.

Reseda Luteola, L., is becoming quite common.

Silene inflata, Sm., and *S. noctiflora*, L., are as abundant as I have ever seen them.

Silene dichotoma, Ehrh., one plant only was seen. This is the first time it has been found here.